

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7878
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY
USLO PEKING PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 08597

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, CH, JA, SK
SUBJECT: PRC-JAPAN-ROK INTERPLAY

REF: A. TOKYO 7850 (NOTAL); B. PEKING 1153 (NOTAL);
C. TOKYO 7470

SUMMARY: THE ALREADY INTRICATE INTERPLAY OF DOMESTIC
POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY IN JAPAN'S RELATIONS WITH CHINA AS
WELL AS SOUTH KOREA HAS BEEN FURTHER COMPLICATED BY EVENTS
OF THE PAST FEW DAYS: COINCIDENTAL CHINESE PROTEST OVER
JAPAN-ROK PLANS FOR JOINT OIL EXPLOITATION IN THE KOREAN
CONTINENTAL SHELF AREA AND RE-ANIMATION OF JAPAN-ROK
FRICTIONS OVER TERRITORIAL BOUNDARIES IN SEA OF JAPAN
AROUND DISPUTED TAKESHIMA/DOK TO ISLAND. ALTHOUGH DUST
HAS YET TO SETTLE IN EITHER CASE, EVENTS HAVE COMPLICATED
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BOTH LDP CONSIDERATION OF SINO-JAPANESE PEACE AND FRIEND-
SHIP TREATY (PFT) AND DIET APPROVAL OF THE KOREAN
CONTINENTAL SHELF IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION. END SUMMARY

1. HEARTENED DY PRESIDENT CARTER'S REPORTED EXPRESSIONS
OF SUPPORT FOR PFT (WHICH JAPANESE MEDIA NOT SURPRISINGLY
SEIZED UPON), PM FUKUDA HAS BEEN RELATIVELY UPBEAT IN HIS

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PFT POSSIBILITIES SINCE HIS RETURN FROM WASHINGTON. AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, REPORTEDLY CONTRARY TO ADVICE OF SOME IN MOFA, HE CONTINUED TO SEEK HIGHER-LEVEL CHINESE EXPLANATION OF INCIDENT THAN HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY OFFERED BY CHINESE TO EITHER VISITING OPPOSITION DIETMEN OR JAPANESE EMBASSY POLCOUNS DONOWAKI (REFTELS). ACCORDINGLY, AMBASSADOR SATO IN PEKING WAS INSTRUCTED TO SEEK AN APPOINTMENT WITH PRC VICE FONMIN HAN NIEN-LUNG FOR THE PURPOSE OF FORMALLY CLOSING THE BOOKS ON SENKAKUS CONTRETEMPS.

2. AT SATO'S REQUEST, HAN REITERATED CHINESE POSITION THAT INCURSION OF CHINESE FISHING BOATS NEAR SENKAKUS HAD BEEN ACCIDENTAL AND BOTH SIDES AGREED TO PURSUE THE CONCLUSION OF PFT ALONG THE LINES OF THE 1972 NORMALIZATION AGREEMENT. (ACCORDING TO JOURNALIST COVERING MOFA, HOWEVER, HAN REPORTEDLY RESTATED CHINESE EXPLANATION OF SENKAKUS INCIDENT WITH SOME ASPERITY, MAKING POINTED COMMENT THAT JAPANESE PEOPLE, AS OPPOSED TO FUKUDA GOVERNMENT, ALREADY UNDERSTOOD CHINESE POSITION.) CHINESE, HOWEVER, TOOK ADVANTAGE OF CALL BY SEIZING INITIATIVE IN FORM OF STRONG PROTEST (THEIR THIRD IN FOUR YEARS) OVER JAPANESE "INFRINGEMENT OF CHINESE SOVEREIGNTY" THROUGH JAPAN-ROK CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT AND IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION NOW BEFORE THE DIET. (TEXT OF PROTEST HAS BEEN PUBLISHED BY NCNA.)
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3. ALTHOUGH CHINESE PROTEST CONTAINED NOTHING NEW AND JAPANESE HAD BEEN AWARE BEFORE MEETING THAT ISSUE WOULD BE RAISED, HAN'S COMMENTS NEVERTHELESS EXCITED SOME CONCERN IN TOKYO, PROMPTING LATE-EVENING HUDDLE OF SONODA AND OTHER SENIOR MOFA OFFICIALS. (ONE THEORY, CONSIDERED BUT GENERALLY DISCOUNTED BY MOFA, WAS THAT CHINESE PROTEST WAS RELATED TO HUA VISIT TO PYONGYANG; I.E., APART FROM ITS OWN DESIRE TO ADVANCE CONTINENTAL SHELF CLAIMS, PRC, EITHER ON ITS OWN OR IN RESPONSE TO

DPRK REQUEST, UNDERTOOK ACTION TO MUDDY ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS. IN HIS SUBSEQUENT COMMENTS TO PRESS, SONODA ATTEMPTED TO PLAY DOWN SIGNIFICANCE OF CHINESE PROTEST FOR PFT NEGOTIATIONS. IN ADDITION, MOFA CHINA DIVISION HAS INFORMED US THAT DESPITE RECENT EVENTS, LDP, HAVING RECEIVED PM'S REQUESTED "EXPLANATION" FROM CHINESE RE SENKAKUS, WOULD SHORTLY RECONVENE ITS FOREIGN AFFAIRS RESEARCH COUNCIL TO RESUME DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL TO OPEN FORMAL PFT NEGOTIATIONS.

4. MOFA OFFICIALS HAVE ALSO EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN THAT

THIS MOST RECENT EXPRESSION OF CHINESE OPPOSITION TO JAPAN-ROK CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT WILL FURTHER COMPLICATE GOJ'S EFFORTS TO GAIN DIET APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT'S IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION, BY PROVIDING DIEHARD OPPONENTS ISSUE WITH WHICH TO DRAG OUT DELIBERATIONS AND, PERHAPS, BY CAUSING LDP LEADERSHIP ELEMENTS TO HESITATE IN PRESSING LEGISLATION THIS SESSION. INITIAL SONODA COMMENTS TO DIET ON THIS ASPECT OF PROBLEM WAS TO ASSERT CSA AND IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION "DOES NOT VIOLATE CHINESE INTERESTS," AND TO REAFFIRM THAT GOVERNMENT POLICY TO RATIFY LEGISLATION REMAINED UNCHANGED. MOREOVER, THERE IS STRONG BODY OF OPINION THAT LDP, PARTICULARLY IN WAKE OF SENKAKU INCIDENT, WILL TRY ALL THE HARDER TO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 TOKYO 08597

GET LEGISLATION THROUGH LEST IT APPEAR THAT GOVERNMENT HAD SUCCUMBED TO CHINESE PRESSURE.

5. CHINESE, HOWEVER, HAVE NOT BEEN THE ONLY ONES CAUSING TROUBLE FOR GOJ. ROK DECLARATION OF 12-MILE TERRITORIAL WATERS HAS RESURRECTED JAPAN-ROK DISPUTE OVER TAKESHIMA/DOK TO ISLAND, LEADING TO EXCHANGE OF PROTESTS DURING PAST WEEK BETWEEN TOKYO AND SEOUL OVER JAPANESE FISHING OPERATIONS IN VICINITY OF ISLAND. THIS IN TURN HAS FORCED GOJ TO CRITICIZE ROK IN DIET INTERPELLATIONS ON ISSUE, PRECISELY WHEN SHELF IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION IS

IN DELICATE DELIBERATION STAGE BEFORE UPPER HOUSE
COMMITTEE. MOFA OFFICIALS NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH TAKESHIMA
CONTROVERSY BY ITSELF SHOULD NOT CAUSE DEFEAT OF
LEGISLATION, ANY ACCOMPANYING RISE IN ANTI-KOREAN SENTI-
MENT COULD ONLY BE UNHELPFUL. MANSFIELD

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